(b) if so, the source of pollution of these rivers and the main factors responsible for pollution in these rivers; and

(c) the details of efforts made, so far/proposed to be made by Government to make these rivers clean and check the pollution in these rivers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) As per the survey conducted by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) alongwith Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board (APPCB), river Godavari is polluted in the stretch from Polavaram to Rajahmundry, river Nagavalli along Thotapalli Regulator and river Musi downstream of Hyderabad, and are having Bio-chemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) values ranging between 6 to 44mg/1.

(b) These rivers are polluted by the discharge of municipal and industrial wastewater. Inadequate flow of fresh water is also responsible for deterioration of water quality of rivers.

(c) For industrial pollution, the APPCB has specifically identified fifteen industrial units discharging wastewater into the rivers of Godavari and Musi, and is enforcing the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 with regard to standards of discharge.

In regard to treatment of municipal wastewater, the Ministry of Environment and Forests has taken up the works related to interception, diversion and treatment of municipal wastewater under the National River Conservation Plan in the towns of Bhadrachalam, Mancherial, Rajahmundry, Ramagundam located along river Godavari, and Hyderabad along river Musi in Andhra Pradesh. Under this programme, two sewage treatment plants have already been set up with a total capacity of 6.46 million litres per day.

Allowing field trials of GM food crops

2327. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the decision to allow field trials in GM food crops may have human and economic cost;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Bt. gene in GM crops has been found to be toxic and Coalition for GM Free India (CFGMFI) have established that Bt. gene affects human and livestock health adversely; and

(c) if so, when Japan and several European countries have banned cultivation of GM food crops, the reasons for allowing its entry without taking adequate precautions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) Introduction of any new technology may have both beneficial and adverse impacts and requires careful evaluation of the long term sustainable benefits. The Government of India is following a policy of case by case approval process for transgenic crops. The product is approved for environmental release only when there is a clear socio-economic and technical justification for release of the product.

(b) GM crops having Bt. gene are being consumed in several countries and there was no scientific evidence generated either by CFGMFI or any other organization on toxicity of Bt. gene to human and animal health. All genetically modified food is tested for toxicity and allergenicity prior to its approval for human consumption.

(c) Japan and European countries consumes GM food crops and some of the countries like Spain, France, Germany do cultivate GM crops. Bt. Cotton is the only transgenic crop approved for commercial cultivation in India. No GM food crop has been permitted for commercial cultivation or marketing in India.

I.T. Companies neglecting health and environment norms

2328. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether international environment activities have voiced concern against major I.T. Companies in India for neglecting health and environment safeguards;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken to ensure that the I.T. Companies comply with health and environment norms?